THE NATIONAL ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF NAPLES

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ALFONSO de FRANCISCIS

THE NATIONAL ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF NAPLES

Artistic Publications **INTERDIPRESS** - Napoli

SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

The Naples Archeological Museum has perhaps one of the wealthiest and most complete collections of art treasures and documents pertaining to the Classic World. This is partly because many treasures have been supplied from the excavations of the two buried cities Pompei and Herculaneum and also because the collections of the Farnese Family are now housed in the museum. Furthermore for more than a century when other local museums were not yet in existence any discoveries made in the Kingdom of Naples were automatically sent to the Museum together with various collections (Borgia di Velletri, Lovisato, Spinelli etc.).

The collection of the findings from Pompei and Herculaneum was begun in the Royal Villa of Portici when the excavations were begun in 1738.

The Farnese collections came to Naples through King Carlo di Borbone the last heir of that family through his mother Elisabetta second wife of Philip V of Spain. The books, paintings and smaller collections were kept in the Palace of Capodimonte (1738 project of Giacomo Antonio Medrano). The ancient sculptures which were in the Farnese villas in Rome were brought to Naples in 1787 and in this year it can be said that the Naples Museum came into being as King Ferdinando decided to give the various collections a permanent exhibition and thus in the following years the "remains" from Portici, the Farnese collections together with those already at Capodimonte were placed in the "palazzo" which is today the Museum.

This building was erected originally in 1585 as a stable but later Viceré Pedro Fernandez de Castron Count of Lemos (1610-1616) had the building transformed into a University by Giulio Cesare Fontana. And here Giambattista Vico taught rhetoric.

Halfway through the 17th century the "palazzo" was enlarged by Sanfelice and Fuga and its function changed. Infact as the Gesuits were supressed in the Kingdom of Naples in 1767, the University was moved to the buildings belonging to the Jesuit Order (1777) and 10 years later the Museum came into being. Through various happenings the Archeological Museum (which until 1957 together with the Art Gallery now in Capodimonte formed the Naples National Museum) has continued to increase its collections and up-date their order within the limits imposed by the architecture of the "palazzo".

(from "A. de Franciscis", Guide of the Archeological National Museum of Naples, 4th edition, of Mauro editor, 1974).

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FUNE[illegible] STELAE

Figure 1

This comes [illegible] the Borgia's di Velletri c[illegible] and is of [illegible] origin dated about 48[illegible] probably produced in Asia Minor or per[illegible] Aegean Isles.

Here the dead person is represented dres[illegible] short cloak leaning on a crutch. Beside h[illegible] dog which looks up at its master. A melan[illegible] mosphere envelops the scene and the scu[illegible] managed to portray an atmosphere far [illegible] from this world.

THE TYR[illegible] KILLERS

Figure 2

In 514 BC the A[illegible] tyrants Ippia and [illegible] were victims of a [illegible] piracy. During a fe[illegible] were attacked by A[illegible]dio and Aristogiton[illegible] co was killed but [illegible] e scuffle the two [illegible] were also killed. Ipp[illegible] was exiled in 510 [illegible] the new government erected a statue in h[illegible] Armodio and Aristogitone, the sculptor w[illegible] nore. This statue was carried off by the [illegible] when they sacked Athens in 480 BC. In [illegible] a new statue was executed by Kritios and [illegible] – again in bronze as was the original. Th[illegible] pictured here is a copy in marble executed [illegible] the Roman era (I and II century AD), th[illegible] mical changes are worth noting and it is [illegible] that the positions of the figures have bee[illegible] what altered.

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FUNERAL STELAE

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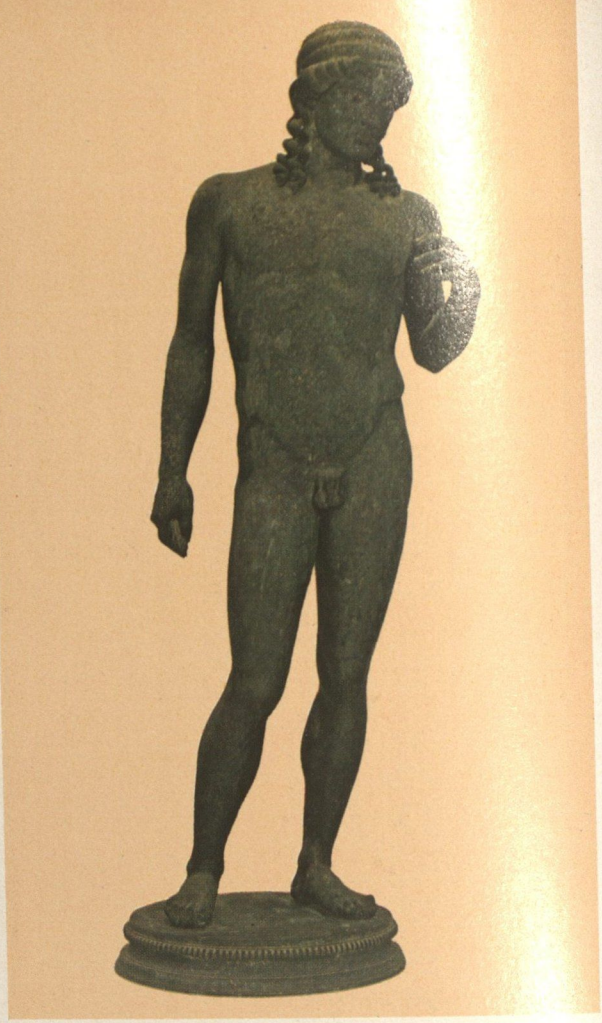
APHRODITE SOSANDRA

Figure 3

A famous ancient statue was the Aphrodite Sosandra sculpted by the ancient sculptor Kalamis and erected about 465 BC in the Acropolis in Athens. The serene smile was greatly admired as was the elegant drapery with which the sculptor conveyed the idea of a goddess. The original bronze statue has been lost but it is thought that this inspired a type of statue of which the best example for artistic execution and state of conservation is the statue found in the ruins of the Imperial Palace of Baia. Also in this Roman copy the artist's sensibility is shown in the expression of the face and the way the heavy cloak falls about the body.

4



APOLLO THE ZITHER PLAYER

Figure 4

From one of the most beautiful villas of Pompei (the Villa of the Zither Player) comes a bronze statue of Apollo holding a zither. The anatomy and the ponderousness of the figure is in the severe ancient style and the face has a noble expression. Other examples of this type of statue are known, all from the Roman era, and from their characteristics of style would seem to originate from an original by Fidia executed in his youth when he had not completely developed his artistic personality.

THE FARNESE ATHENA

Figure 5

During the plague of 430 BC Pericles dedicated a statue to the goddess Athena in the Acropolis in Athens. The sculptor was Pyrrhos, a student of Fidia, who copied from his master the new expression and original plastic conception which so valorizzed art in Attica. Thus according to the Fidian ideals the goddess is represented in all her majesty, benevolent and protecting the men and city preferred by her. The drapery which falls without rigidity about the goddess helps give this effect. This is an excellent copy of the original and is datable in the Roman Imperial era.

5

6

RELIEF OF ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Figure 6

Here we have one of the saddest moments in Greek mythology represented. Eurydice having died from an asp's bite is in the Underworld. Her husband Orpheus is allowed to lead her back to the land of the living on the condition that he does not turn and look at her. However he is unable to resist the impulse to look back and Hermes the spirit guide leads Eurydice back to the Underworld. The balanced composition and expression makes this relief one of the best Attica sculptures of the post-fidian period datable about 410 BC.

POLICLETO'S SPEARMAN

Figure 7

Policleto of Argo, the great sculptor wh was a contemporary of Fidia, in a thesis called nón" expounded his theories on the ideal forn f the human body and the proportions of its ious parts. He applied these theories in a sta of a young man with a lance (doriforo). The ginal work in bronze has been lost but there a many copies of the Roman era and the best i uch as it follows most closely Policleto's theories now in the Naples Museum having been found the Samnite Gymnasium in Pompei. The limbs a pro-portioned in accordance with precise mathe ical calculations and are balanced as the weight the body rests on the right leg and the right ar is at rest whilst the left arm is in action corresponding with the leg behind. The whole figure is perfectly balanced and rests lightly on the ground. The structure of the nude is rendered although not forcedly so by the features of the anatomy and the muscles which follow the pose of the figure. Here in synthesis we find the body perfect aspired to in greek art and the athletic ideal.

8

DIOMEDES

Figure 8

In general this type of statue is attributed to the sculptor Kresilas who was active in the second half of the V century BC. Represented here is a dramatic episode in the capture of Troy; we see Diomedes carrying off the Palladium, the sacred image of Athens and token of the safety of that city, which he together with Ulysses had stolen.
On the base of the statue in the Naples Museum is an inscription bearing the name of the sculpture's owner, Claudio Pollione Frugiano.

9

EPHEBE OF VIA DELL'ABBONDANZA

Figure 9

Considered a Roman copy of an attic original of halfway through the V century BC, the Ephebe found in Pompei in a house in Via dell'Abbondanza is in reality a Roman neo-classic work datable in the Augustan era which re-echoes the greek statues of the classic period.
The young figure is shown as a lamp carrier, and supports in his hands two curved hooks from which oil lamps should be suspended.

THE DYING AMAZON
Figure 10

THE DYING PERSIAN
Figure 11

In the Acropolis of Athens existed groups of statues erected, it would seem, by Attalo II King of Pergamum, to commemorate the victorious campaign of Attalo I against the Galations who had invaded Mysia in 239 BC. The statues represent the geat victory of civilisation (and of Hellas) over the barbarians; that is to say of the gods over the giants, of the Athenians over the Amazons and Persians and of the Pergamanians over the Gauls. The original groups were by Pergamanian artists of the II century BC and served as the inspiration for the larger groups ordered by Attalo I for the city of Pergamum and we can recognise them from more recent copies such as these.

VENUS CALLIPIGE
Figure 12

This is the tradition name, with no scientific foundation, of the statue found in the *Domus aurea* of Nero in Rome, and which must have been an ornament for a bath or fountain. The young woman is lifting the edge of her dress thus baring her back and looks back to admire her reflection in the water.
The statue is graceful and has a dreamlike quality, the original theme is expressed by the delicate twisting of the figure and was originally executed by a sculptor of the Hellenic era. This excellent Roman copy is datable at the end of the Ist century BC.

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APHRODITE OF SINUESSA
Figure 13

Found in Campania, on the ancient site of Sinuessa (today Mondragone) this is an original Greek work. The nude torso of the goddess which has a graceful posture, vaguely recalls the style of Praxiteles but in contrast to the smoothness of the body are the folds of cloth which is wrapped around her legs, the cloth breaks into numerous pleats in all directions creating a myriad of forms and rich effects of light and shadow. This work which came from Hellenistic workshops, probably from Attica, is datable from the II century BC.

THE FARNESE HERCULES
Figure 14

So called because it comes from the collection belonging to the Farnese family. The hero is represented resting on a club after completing one of his tasks, the theft of the apples of Hesperides which he holds in his right hand. The tired attitude is underlined by the muscular and massive body. The statue is signed by the Athenian Glykon and was found in the thermae of Caracalla. It is dated at the beginning of the III century AD and indeed the sculptor has indulged in the tendency to gigantic and molded form common to that period. However Glykon must have used as a model a lost work of Lysippus which he adapted to the style of the period in which he worked.

THE FARNESE EROS
Figure 15

Of all his artistic works Praxiteles preferred a statue of Eros which he had sculpted for Frine who in turn had offered it to the sanctuary of Eros in Thespis. This is a Roman copy of the original sculpture which clearly bears the Praxiteles mark.
The god of love is depicted in a thoughtful and almost melancholy pose as if to symbolise the worries which the problems of lovers bring on his shoulders. A Greek epigram on this statue states "Praxiteles knew how to express his (Eros') suffering which he drew from his own heart".

VASE FROM GAETA
Figure 16

This is a large bowl in greek marble bearing the signature of the sculptor, an athenian called Salpion. Hermes is represented consigning the infant Dionysus to the nymph Nysa who will raise him, at the event are present other personages connected with the Dionysus myth. The principal scene is from a composition which goes back to the last decades of the IV century BC, re-elaborated by Salpion. This sculptor was active in the 1st BC century and was one of the first artists of the eclectic school known as neo-attica. The bowl was found on the site of ancient Formia and served as a mooring for ships in the port of Gaeta and later as a baptismal font in the Duomo.

16

17

TORSO OF PSYCHE

Figure 17

This is one of the most famous statues in the Naples Museum and has always held a particular attraction. The fragmentary state of the statue means that its original aspect remains a mystery. The purity of the modelling and extremely smooth surface (although this latter was the result of rather too enthusiastic restoration during the 17th century) are elements which increase the charm of this figure.
The statue datable in the Roman era was inspired by a work of the Hellenic era and originally adorned the ampitheatre of ancient Capua.

18

APHRODITE OF CAPUA

Figure 18

The Roman ampitheatre of ancient Capua (S. Maria Capua Vetere) was decorated with many sculptures almost all today lost. This example is one of the few remaining and represents the goddess Aphrodite looking at herself in the shield of Ares which she is using as a mirror. It is a theme which simbolically expresses the love between these two gods which poets beginning with Homer related.
A sculpture of this subject must have been created halfway through the IV century BC in the artistic circles of Scopas or Praxiteles but during the Hellenic and Roman eras the subject was adopted and elaborated considerably. Of all those known to us this statue from Capua would appear to be nearest the original.

19

SATYR AND DIONYSUS
Figure 19

Hellenic art preferred rural and pastoral themes and consequently the lesser figures of the mythological world which were in harmony with these themes such as satyrs, centaurs and sileni. This statue which has been considerable restored shows the young satyr carrying the young god Dionysus on his shoulders.
This lively and easy composition has a carefree feeling even though the subject is a god and his adept.

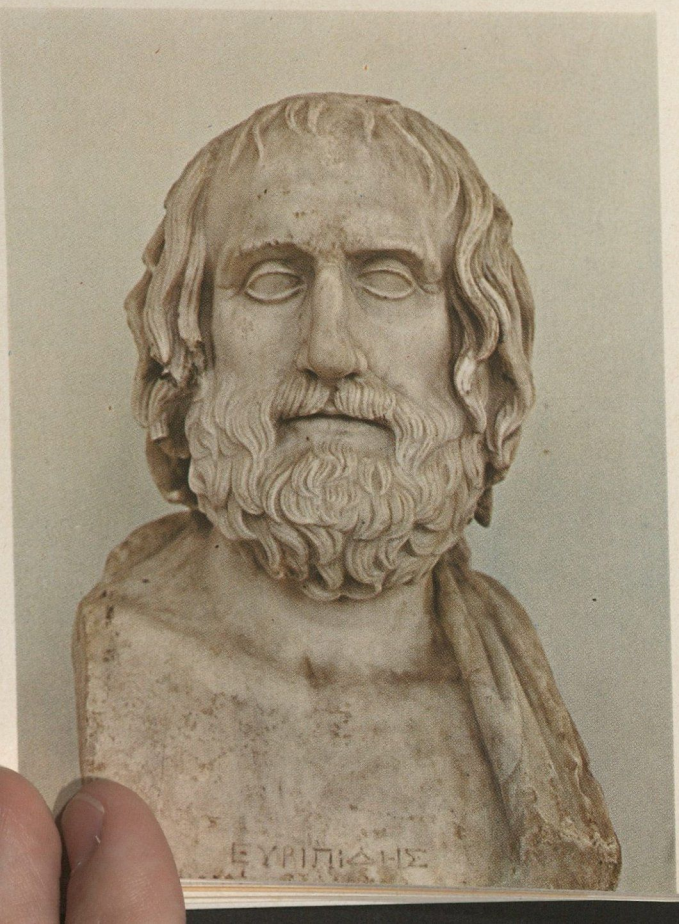
THE FARNESE BUL
Figure 20

This is the traditional name given to this marble group which is probably the largest (approx. 4 metres high) surviving statue from ancient times and was found in the Thermae of Caracalla in Rome. It is a copy of the II or III century AD of a late Hellenistic work (I century BC) by Apollonios and Tauriskos of Tralles.
The scene takes place on Mount Cythaeron - Amphion and Zethos are going to avenge their mother Antiope who was for many years kept in servitude and ill-treated by Lykos, King of Thebes, and his wife Dirke. Having killed Lykos they surprise Dirke as she makes a sacrifice to Dionysus and fasten her to the horns of a mad bull. In the background Antiope watches her sons' actions.
The little shepherd with barking dogs embodies Mount Cythaeron and the whole group is mounted on a rocky base sculpted with animals and trees to represent the landscape.

SOCRATES

Figure 21

The physical appearance of the great Athenian philosopher is recorded by the ancient writers as not being very pleasant. His portrait has been handed down in many examples which were originally based on 3 distinct types.
This portrait on the herma of the Naples Museum is based on a bronze statue by Lisippus. It is apparently an individualistic portrait as the artist has accented, changing in his creative fantasy, the characteristic traits. On the same herma is inscribed a passage from Plato on the power of reason.



EURIPIDES

Figure 22

We can be certain that this portrait of Euripides from the inscription on the base of the herma. The artist has tried the tragic poet's features in such a way as to indicate the ethic and psychological attributes of this complex and tormented personality. This work shows a clear influence of Lysippus' art and the original must have been created in the second half of the IV century BC.

HERMES AT REST

Figure 23

Hermes is here represented as the messenger of the gods and infact in his right hand he holds the caduceus (only part remains) and his feet are winged. He appears to be resting briefly but ready to spring up and continue his journey at any moment. The sculptor has given the idea of promptness for flight in the light inclination of the body, the position of the limbs and the concentrated gaze. The slim and athletic proportions together with the nervous anatomy show the god as a human being and are all ideals of Lysippus and if not actually sculpted by him it is certain that the original from which this was copied was of his school.

THE WRESTLERS

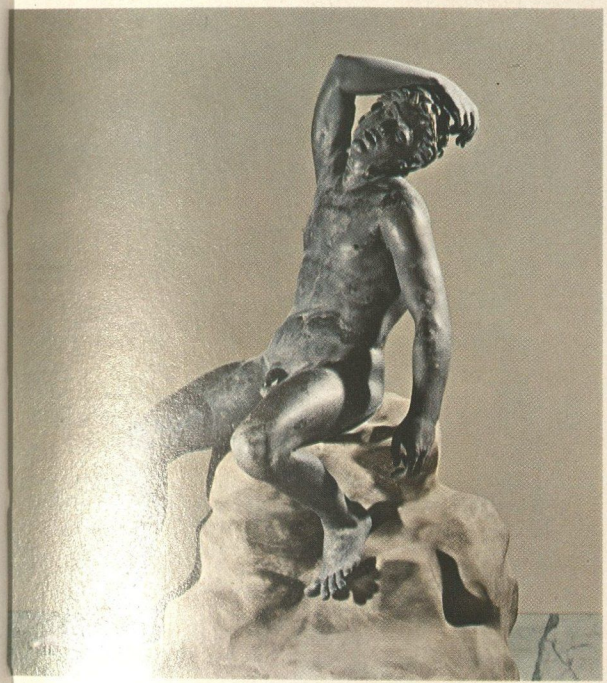
Figure 24

The traditional interpretation of these two bronze sculptures is that they are wrestlers. The young athletes are about to begin the match and are so similar that it would appear that they are derived from the same type of statue. The proportions of the body, freedom of movement and lively expression would indicate that they were sculpted in Lysippus' school at the end of the IV century BC.

THE SLEEPING SATYR
Figure 25

The young satyr is sleepy from his drunkeness. His semi-wild nature is discretely indicated by the tail, small horns and goatlike throat but the human element prevails in the body and in the sense of oblivious sleep. A typical creation of Hellenic art of about III century BC which inspired the Roman sculptor to execute this statue.

25



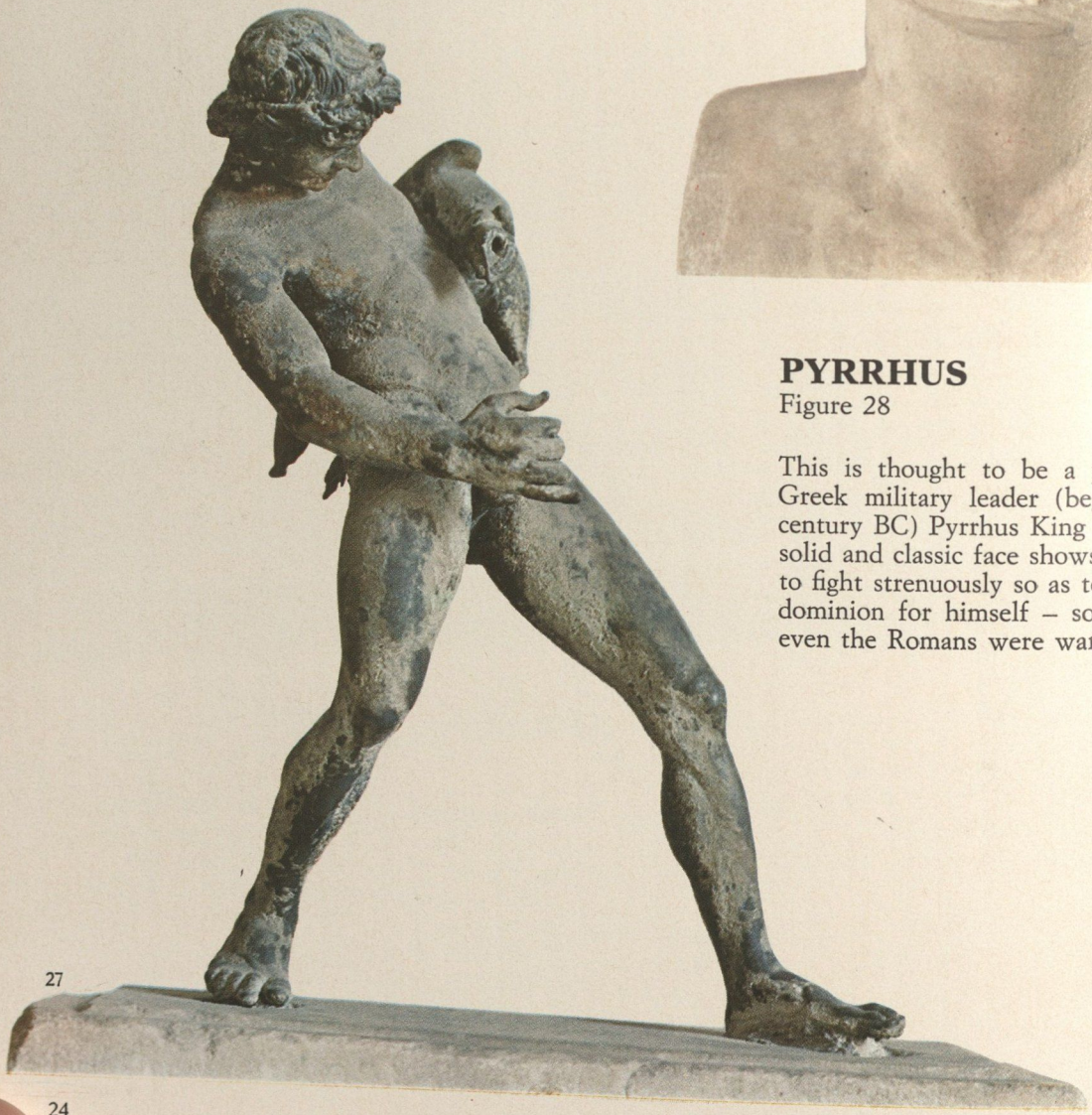
26

THE DRUNKEN SILENUS
Figure 26

Reclining on a lion skin the old silenus is completely immersed in drunken hilarity. His head is crowned with vine leaves and his left elbow leans on a half empty wine skin whilst his right arm is held high and he snaps his figures with glee induced by the wine.
The anatomy is full of vivacity showing a senile body with flaccid muscles.
The sculpture is based on a Hellenic original datable about halfway through the III century BC.

THE YOUNG SATYR
Figure 27

A young satyr pours wine from a wineskin making the wine gush into the cup which he holds in his hand. In the attempt to maintain the wine skin the body is balanced on parted legs resulting in a lively attitude which shows the play of muscles. This is datable in the Ist century of the Empire. This is one of the most graceful examples of small sculptures in bronze or marble which decorated the houses and gardens and were sometimes used as fountain ornaments, harmonising the subject, action, setting and the function for which it was destined.



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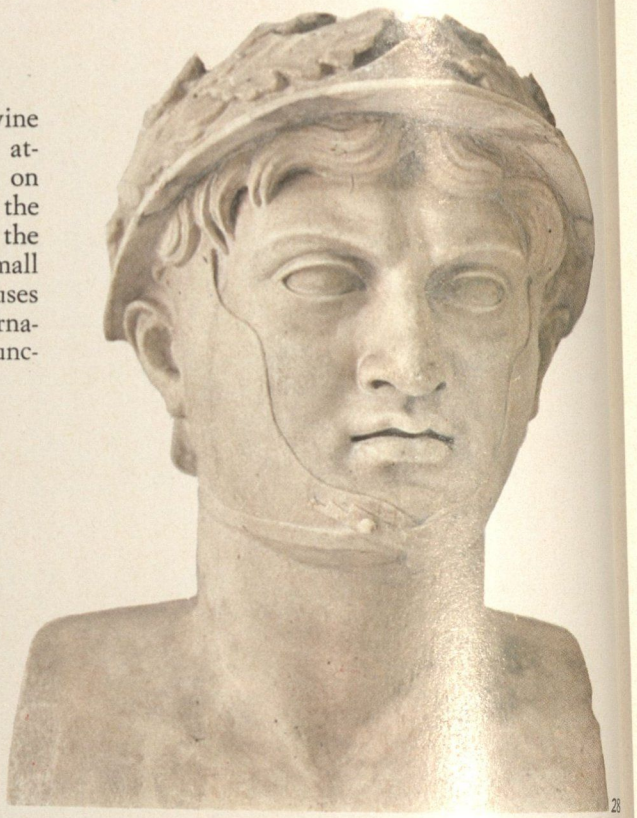

28

PYRRHUS
Figure 28

This is thought to be a portrait of the Greek military leader (beginning of III century BC) Pyrrhus King of Epirus. The solid and classic face shows a man willing to fight strenuously so as to create a large dominion for himself – so much so that even the Romans were wary of him.

HOMER

Figure 29

When the fashion for portraits developed in Greece, it was obvious that some artists tried to create a portrait of Homer, "reconstructing" the physical features from handed down descriptions and at the same time interpreting the human aspect and psyche of such a strong personality as this their most famous poet. Of the various iconic interpretations of Homer, the portrait in the Naples Museum is the most expressive, full of plastic values and creative intuition. The blindness of the poet underlines his inspiration and the tormented facial features relive the acts and passions of so many heroes.
This sculpture was created in the moving atmosphere of late Hellenism about halfway through the 1st century BC.

SO CALLED SENECA

Figure 30

This is usually considered to be the portrait of the Roman philosopher and writer Seneca, but this is doubtful, other hypothesis include Homer, Hesiod, Aristophanes, Euripides, Philomelo, Lucretius etc.
It is certainly one of the most beautiful portraits which has come to us from ancient times. The poetic intuition of the sculptor has successfully portrayed a vigorous natural portrait.
There is also an acute psychological penetration which expresses the intimate sentiments of this personality through the facial features. It is uncertain to which artistic period this sculpture belongs but it can be attributed to the Hellenic-Roman trend of the 1st century BC.

31

THE DANCERS OF HERCULANEUM

Figure 31

In the first decades of the Roman Empire more than at any other time, a school of figurative art was promoted which produced works which, without actually copying works from ancient and classic Greece nevertheless copied the style from this period.

A beautiful example of this neo-classic style is the group of so called "dancers" sculptured in bronze which represents the water carriers which decorated the garden of the Villa of Papyrus in Herculaneum. This is an original interpretation of the severe Greek style.

NORBANO SORICE

Figure 32

As often happens with portraits found in Pompei there is no doubt as to the identity of the person portrayed as the relative inscription informs us that the portrait is of a certain Caio Norbano Sorice who was an actor. In this sculpture there is a lively sense of structural compactness and the expression of the individual characteristics are skillfully rendered by the position of the head which looks directly ahead. The solid facial features create a varied play of lights and volume. The critical interpretation of this work is controversial. It is sometimes included with other Roman portraits of an egyptian flavour and sometimes with Roman art of the Republican era. It can however be considered a production, perhaps local, in pure italic tradition datable in the last decades of the 1st century BC, that is to say the first Augustan period. This conclusion is drawn from the stylistic analysis and an inscription which refers to a suburb of Pompei named after the Emperor Augustus.

32

L. CECILO

Figure 33

This is one of the most famous portraits of Pompei. It was found in the house of L. Cecilo Giocondo, a rich Pompeian banker, who lived and was active in the 10 years which preceded the eruption of Vesuvius and it is generally accepted that this portrait is of Cecilo himself.
However the style leads us to believe that it was produced in the Augustan era and it is more probably his father who is represented. Worth noting is the great detail with which the facial features are represented with extreme realism and yet without artifice in such a way that the features are neither accented nor exaggerated.
The validity of this portrait as a work of art is in the vivacity and simpleness with which the sculptor has been able to portray the human features.

33

34

JULIUS CAESAR

Figure 34

The coins bearing the image of Julius Caesar, both those contemporary to his lifetime as well as those minted later on, provide us with little data as to the features of this Dictator. It is still more difficult to identify the facial features on his statues.
One of the few portraits which we can be sure is of Julius Caesar is this one of extremely large dimensions. This work is of the Trajan era and must therefore have been inspired by previous portraits of the Caesarian or Augustan eras. The figure of Caesar has been idealized but still conserves the realism of the original. The portraits of Caesar were reproduced in the centuries of the Empire as he was the symbol of imperial power and it was to him that the emperors aspired as the greatest politician Rome ever had.

PORTRAITS OF AUGUSTUS

Figures [illegible] and 36

There are many portraits surviving of the Emperor Augustus found throughout the entire Roman Empire of varying quality and various artistic schools. The large bronze statue of Herculaneum shows the Emperor with the aspect of Jupiter, the most important of the gods, obviously to exhalt the figure of the Emperor who was above other mortals. The half naked body which is only partially covered by a mantle, sceptre in left hand and thunderbolt in right hand are all characteristics of statues of divinities.

The lean modelling which is sometimes wooden and the naturalness, of the face lead us to believe that it is product of a local Herculanean workshop or some other centre of Campania.

The marble bust found in Fondi has different characteristics – the features of the Emperor are interpreted classically, here the artist is less interested in faithfully reproducing the features but in representing a figure of the highest order and was influenced by the Greek portraits.

36

37

OLCONIO RUFO

Figure 37

We know that Marco Olconio Rufo was an eminent citizen of Pompei, he was *duovir* five times, military tribune and priest of Augustus. We have to thank him and his brother Celere for the recon-

struction of the theatre and the Pompeians erected two statues in their honour.
Here Olconio is shown in military uniform, above the short tunic he wears richly decorated armour, while the cloak covers his shoulders and falls over his arms. The sculptor wished to catch the features of this individual with a moderate realistic sentiment necessitated in carrying out an "official" portrait and from the face there is a certain academism which predominated in Rome in portraits of this period. This is therefore an interesting testimony of Pompeian art and the cultural relations between this city and the centre of the Empire. The statue from the style can be dated in the first Augustan era.

EUMACHIA
Figure 38

In Pompei, the priestess Euma[illegible] had built at her own expense most of the [illegible]e building destined to be the seat of the *fullones* and the depository and selling place [illegible] wool and woollen clothing. In this buildi[illegible] which was sited in the Forum, the *fullones* [illegible] a sign of their gratitude, erected a statu[illegible] her honour. The priestess is represente[illegible] with her head covered by a mantle, the drapery is executed with grace and accuracy, revealing in the classic lines its derivation from a Greek type of statue of the IV century BC.
The influence of Greek art is noted also in the face, here instead of the typical feminine face found in Roman portraits the features are rendered in the style of Praxiteles – the expression is indefinite, the eyes deep and dreamlike. This statue was executed in the Tiberian era.

VESP[illegible]AN AND TITUS
Figures [illegible] and 40

At the time of the emperors of the Flavian peoples Roman art toned down considerably the classic flavour which had predominated in the previous Julius-Claudius period, and took on the figurative school which was nearer the Roman-Italic artistic flavour. An immediate reflection of this new tendency is found in the portraits of the emperors, especially those of Vespasian and Titus. The facial features are rendered with an immediacy and marked natural sense which shuns all idealisation. It can be said that the artists who created these statues have felt and wished to express the nature of the Roman citizen of good stock who had the practical sense and capacity to rule the destiny of the Empire, rather than the princely personage, head of state, who was held for his authority and powers above his brother citizens.

41

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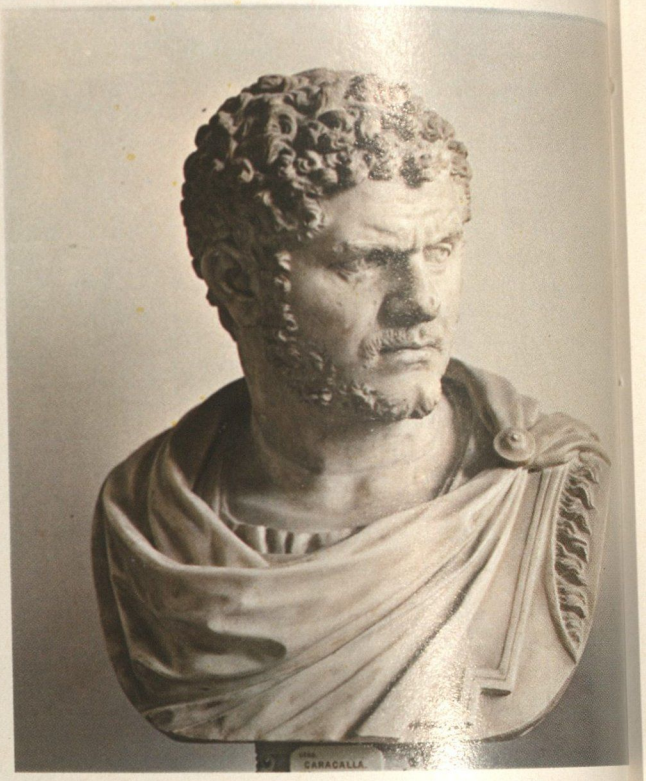

MARCO AURELIO

Figure 41

CARACALLA

Figure 42

From the portraits of the Roman emperors we have an excellent idea of the advancement of art in Rome. We can see the positions in favour, styles and formal aspect of this art in various moments as well as the psychological and environmental factors which influenced all artistic creations. For example in the portraits of M. Aurelio, although of varying quality depending on the sensibilities of the individual artists, there predominates the wish to portray in the most complete way possible this exceptional personality who was an army leader and philosopher bound to the Roman political tradition but at the same time a lover of Hellenic wisdom.

The portraits of Caracalla on the other hand portray a proud and imperial man but also allude to the tormented and anguished vision of the world which was to be the typical spiritual outlook of the late Empire.

ANTINOO
Figure 43

Antinoo, the young favourite of the emperor Hadrian, drowned in the Nile in 130 AD. Statues of him were spread throughout the Empire and Hadrian wished him to be honoured like a god. Infact many portraits of Antinoo which have come down to us represent him with the aspect of Apollo, Bacchus or other minor deities.

The statue in the Naples Museum however accents the human aspect and particularly beautiful physique. The ideal of Greek statutory is here translated in a classic if slightly baroque interpretation which is typically the style of sculpture of the Hadrian era.

ARTEMIS OF EPHESUS
Figure 44

The idol of the cult of Artemis of Ephesus, conceived as goddess of nature corresponded to the oriental religious conception but the iconographic type was accepted by both the Greek and Roman worlds. This example in the Naples Museum is datable in the II century AD. The goddess is represented according to a rigid archaic scheme wrapped in chitone, the body is covered with representations of animals and other figures which have symbolic if not very clear meanings. On the chest are four layers of breasts representing nature which nourishes all.

THE SARCOPHAGUS OF POZZUOLI
Figure 45

Here we have Prometheus creating man. At the centre of the scene is Prometheus with a man which he has moulded stretched out on the ground in front of him, beside him is Psyche representing the spirit which must give life to the body. All around are various deities: Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Hermes, Pluto, Persophone and their presence indicates the participation of the gods at the various stage in the life of man. A scene therefore full of symbolism where we see primitive myths and philosophical beliefs of the late Hellenic and Roman periods.
From the point of view of an artistic work it has great technical merit, being very elaborate both in the position of the various figures as well as the way they are sculpted, almost completely detached from the base thus creating a complicated play of light and shadow.
This is a characteristic example of Roman sculpture of the III century AD.

NTINGS
MOSAICS

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MOSAIC OF ALEXANDER

Figures 1 and 2

This mosaic found in Pompei, made up the pavement of one of the main rooms in the House of the Faun, one of the oldest and richest houses in Pompei. The last phase of a battle is depicted, probably the Battle of Isse (333 BC), and shows the Greek-Macedonian army of Alexander the Great and the Persian army under Darius. The Persians flee from the charge of the Macedonian army and the two kings clash.

Alexander on horseback victoriously gives chase, whilst Darius flees in his chariot, his followers sacrificing themselves for his safety. Points to note are the sense of multitude although few figures are infact used and the single but dramatic episodes. The choice of sober colours and light tones result in the sense of unity and compactness of the overall scene.

This Pompeian mosaic is a reproduction of an original by a great artist of the last decades of the 4th century BC.

From written evidence various hypothesis have been developed as to the identity of the original artist including Filosseno of Eretria, Aristide of Thebes or Elena of Alessandria.

MOSAICS OF DIOSKURIDES
Figure 3

In Cicero's villa in Pompei two mosaic pictures signed by Dioskurides of Samos have been found. One shows a group of strolling musicians and the other a sorceress with her young clients. Both scenes are thought to have been taken from a Greek comedy rather than everyday life. The choice of colours and composition of the groups give in the first a sense of squalor and in the second the idea of women gossiping. The technique is very expert with chiaroscuro, glazing and shading which helps suggest depth and space.
Dioskurides was probably inspired by asiatic paintings of the 3rd century BC and these mosaics are datable about 100 BC.

MARINE FAUNA
Figure 4

Hellenistic art which includes many subjects from nature could not exclude the variable and changing world of marine fauna. From a work, today lost, of an expert artist of the time, are derived some mosaics which differ little one from another and which are not comparable with the original. Here we have the fauna group superimposed on a seascape with rocks. The acute observation of nature enables us to recognize the various species and give a very lifelike quality to this extremely accurate mosaic. The central episode is a battle between an octupus and a lobster which was a popular theme in the narratives of ancient writers.

PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN IN MOSAIC

Figure 5

An echo of the artistic art of the Hellenistic period is found in a delicate portrait which was set in the floor of a villa at Pompei. This is probably the portrait of a poetess or princess of the period and not of the owner as is usually thought.
The young woman is soberly dressed in a tunic and cloak with a simple necklace and gold earrings.

TOMB PAINTINGS FROM RUVO

Figure 6

On the walls of the tomb a ritual funeral dance is depicted. The women, hand in hand, in a long line follow with rhythmic steps the music which we imagine must accompany the dance. The composition is solemn and austere, the gestures simple and methodical are repeated almost without variation; the colours of the clothing are used to establish the personalities of the single figures, almost all the same.
This is an example of the artistic climate of the Italian peoples who, although knowing and echoing the fundamentals of Hellenic art, knew how to express their own taste and also to adhere to the realities of everyday life.
It is difficult to date with exactness this picture but it is generally thought to date from the second half of the 5th century BC.

PAINTINGS FROM BOSCOREALE

Figures 7 and 8

From a villa discovered at Boscoreale near Pompei, which it would seem belonged to P. Fannio Sinistore, have come many mural paintings now scattered throughout various museums.

The paintings are in the 2nd Pompeian style and are datable midway through the first century BC. In the Naples Museum we have two examples: The first is an architectural representation with columns in the foreground which create an excellent idea of perspective. Further back is a closed door with a decorated architrave and fronton. The wall in the painting is crowned with a double shelf ornamented with figures and on the upper shelf rest two masks. In the background, behind the wall, are more architectural figures again in perspective.

The second example was part of the triclinium of the villa which was decorated on all sides by paint-

ings of groups of figures divided by parastades. The mural in the Naples museum shows to the left a bearded old man resting on a stick and would appear to be a philosopher. To the right are two women, one of whom holds a lance and a macedonian shield rests at her side, the other woman is seated and wears a Persian style hat. There are various interpretations as to the meaning of these paintings; they appear to represent both in a historical and mythical sense the Macedonian Court with allusion to Alexander the Great's conquest and the successive dynasties. Another interpretation is that the murals have a religious significance and represent the cult of Aphrodite.

The owner of the villa obviously loved to decorate the walls of his home with paintings which were inspired by those of the third century BC, that is to say a vigorous style with well modelled figures.

THEATRE ACTORS
Figure 9

As well as solemn architecture and large cycles of paintings in the second Pompeian style of painting we find small paintings of various subjects.
In Herculaneum four examples of such paintings have been found which for their quality and "classicness" have been admired by such greats as Winckelmann. The example shown here depicts an actor in royal costume ready to go on stage – the background is light in tone and has a precise and accurate line and extremely elegant composition.

THE RUSTIC CONCERT
Figure 10

Pan and the nymphs tune up for a rustic concert; Pan plays the syrinx and the nymphs a lyre and double tibia. Another nymph is listening. The drawing is sober and the balanced composition reveals a Greek inspiration. However the scene is depicted in a rocky landscape including large trees and a house which is completely Roman inasmuch as the Romans liked to create surroundings for their figures. The landscape with these light tones gives a fairylike setting for the mythical figures which with their colourful clothing are vivacious by comparison.
The painting is in the IIIrd Pompeian style dating from the Augustus era.

HERACLES AND TELEFO
Figure 11

This painting was found together with others in a public building in Herculaneum which must have been the Basilica of the town. Heracles gazes attentively at a child being suckled by a deer and recognises his son Telefo. The episode is placed in Arcadia as can be seen from the female figure sitting on a rock with a satyr behind her. A lion and eagle symbolise royal power whilst a winged Nemesis hints at the fatality of the event. This grandiose composition is very colorful and dates from the Flavian era, but probably goes back to a work of Pergamanian art intended to pay homage to the ruling line, the Attalidis, with the story of their mythological ancestor.

ACHILLES IN SCIRO
Figure 12

Achilles to avoid going to the Trojan War where he will surely die seeks refuge with the daughters of Licomede, King of Sciro, wearing womans clothing. Ulysses disguised as a merchant discovers Achilles and takes him to the War. This episode is one of the most famous of the epic Trojan cycle and is the subject of many murals of the Flavian era. This period of Roman paintings in Pompei demonstrates animated composition with a predilection for well formed figures and colour contrast on an architectural background.

THE SACRIFICE OF IPHIGENIA
Figure 13

Iphigenia is being led to the sacrifice, immolating herself for the propitious departure of the Greek heroes for the Trojan War. The priest Calcante seems rather unwilling to perform his duty and Agamemnon leader of the troops and also father of the victim turns his back on the scene and covers his face with his hands. Above Artemis and a

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MEDEA
Figure 14

The sorceress Medea contemplates killing her children to avenge her husband Jason who intends marrying another woman. The myth, which inspired both Greek and Roman poets, is depicted in this painting at its most dramatic moment: The figure of Medea which seems torn by various passions is contrasted by the two children who play nearby completely unaware of the fate in store for them, watched over, although in vain, by an old pedagogue.

PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA
Figure 15

The hero has killed the sea monster to which Andromeda had been offered as a sacrifice and frees the girl from the rock to which she had been tied. This is the final phase in one of Perseus' adventures. This episode is represented many times in paintings in Herculaneum and Pompei but in differing styles in such a way that another painting of the same subject by the Athenian Nicia (second half of VI century BC) can only be considered an inspiration which Roman artists then interpreted in accordance with their own style and capacity.

PORTRAIT PAINTINGS

Figures 16 and 17

Portraits must have been extremely common in the Roman world, it was the custom to keep portraits of ancestors in the houses and infact many have been found in Pompei, some of which are justly famous.

The most beautiful of this series is a painting depicting, it is thought, Paquio Proculo and his wife.

This is a vivacious portrait of a Pompeian couple of what we would today refer to as the lower middle class. Infact the couple insisted on being depicted holding a papyrus volumen and a wax tabella so as to give an air of importance and seriousness to their portrait – all in vain as they cannot disguise their rather modest background.

Rather more delicate is the portrait of a girl who seems to be looking for inspiration in the tabella in her left hand while holding a pen to her lips.

Figures 18-19-20

The Roman murals found in Pompei and other cities buried by the eruption of Vesuvius show a large variety of subjects as well as quality of expression. Besides the mythological paintings which decorate the centre walls are figures of women, cupids, animals, still lifes and decoration of every kind.
Extremely moving is the "Primavera" (Spring) from Stabiae, a delightful picture of a young girl shown with her back to us gathering flowers on a green background – the figure appears to be in an almost dreamlike setting. However the still lifes are extremely realistic, either with fruit or animals, and show acute observation but at the same time the style of the artists has avoided the danger of too "wooden" a picture.
Even simple everyday activities inspired these painters. For example there is a small painting of a Bakers Shop complete with bread displayed on the counter.

PAINTINGS ON MARBLE

Figures 21 and 22

These small paintings on marble are one of the most interesting items in the Naples Museum, both from a technical and artistic point of view. The paintings are fairly well conserved but rather than the final colours appear the preparatory drawings in red lead which also served to scratch the marble's smooth surface. The mythological subjects in neoclassical Roman style are "the astragal players" and "Piritoo and Ippodamia" and are of graceful if somewhat academic composition.

The painting "the astragal plaiers" bears the name of the Athenian artist Alexandros.

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MINOR ARTS

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ANCIENT CERAMICS FROM CUMA

Figures 1 and 2

Some of the oldest evidence of Hellenic civilisation brought to Italy by Greek colonists can be seen in the geometrical styled vases found in great quantities in Cuma. These vases were greatly influenced by the geometrical ceramics of the mother country but were manufactured in the colonies.
The vases of various forms and dimensions were produced, it is thought, for use in tombs.

CUP WITH DIONYSUS AND SEMELE

Figure 3

On this cup Dionysus and Semele are figured one in front of the other. Satyrs, maenads and vines complement the two figures. This is an Attic ceramic work with black figures of midway through the VI century BC attributed to the "painter of Kallis".

4

CRATER OF MYSON
Figure 4

This is a red figured "columned" crater of Attic manufacture. On one side Arianna is shown mounting Dionysus' chariot and on the other is represented a mythical fight between the Centaurs and the Lapithae, the Lapitha Kaineus who was invulnerable is beaten into the ground by blows from stones wielded by The Centaurs. The work attributed to the ceramist Myson is dated 500-480 BC.

5

HYDRIA VIVENZIO
Figure 5

The name comes from the first owner. Various scenes from the Trojan war are represented: Priamo is killed by Neottolemo whilst holding the corpse of Astianatte in his lap: the appearance of Andromeda: Cassandra torn from the Palladium: Enea fleeing.
The work is attributed to the greatest ancient ceramist "the painter of Kleophrades" and is dated 500-475 BC.

THE CRATER OF PRONOMOS
Figure 6

A group of actors prepare for the performance, some hold the masks which they are to use, others practice dance steps and musical instruments. Dionysus, in whose honour the performance will be, watches the preparations together with Arianna. The scene is particularly interesting for the costumes as well as for the style which belongs to an Attic ceramist of the end of the V century BC.
The vase's name comes from the name of one of the actors represented.

6

7

STAMNOS OF NOCERA

Figure 7

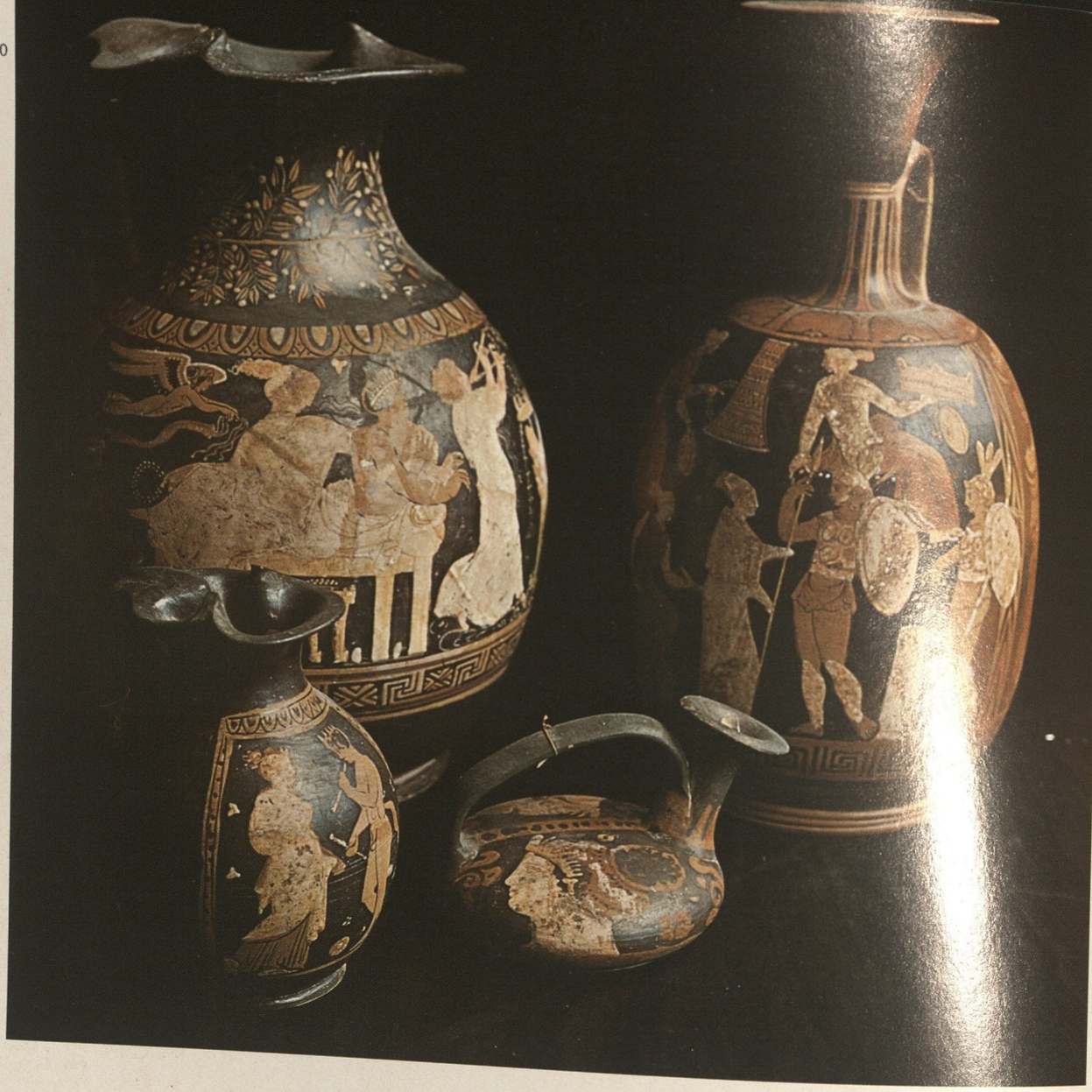
In the centre is an idol of Dionysus, shown in his primitive and rural aspect. All around menaeds bearing offerings dance and sing at the feast in honour of the god.
From the free and lively style this can be considered an Attic work datable between the end of the V century BC and the beginning of the IV century BC. It is attributed to the "painter of Deinos".

8

TWO CRATERS OF APULIA

Figures 8 and 9

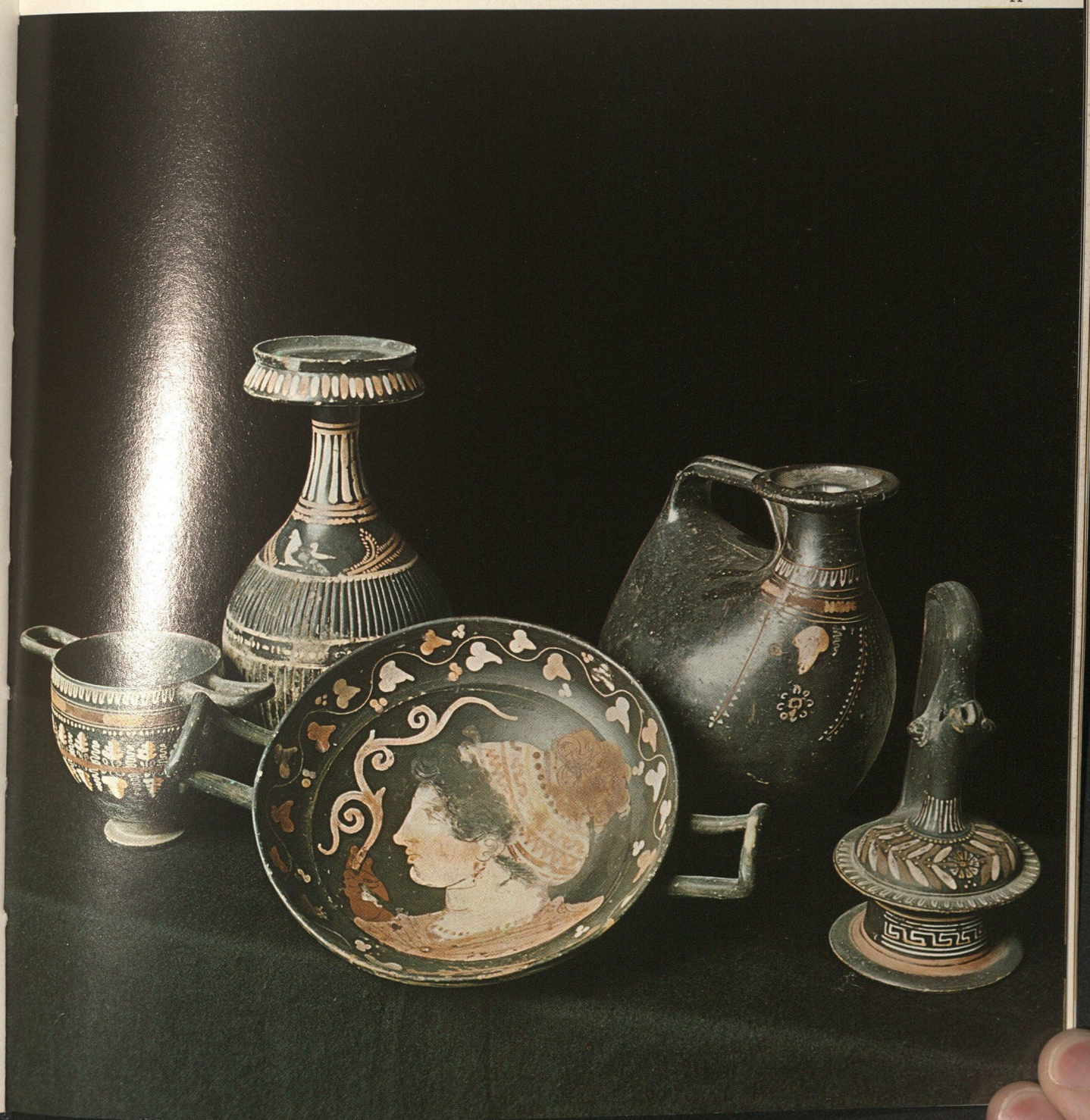
The most famous and interesting ceramic work of the vast production in southern Italy was the crater known as "the Persians". Usually the figures painted on the vases came from the classical myths but here we have the first Persian war against the Greeks represented – this was a war which was very significant to the Hellenic peoples as it was a crucial moment in their history.
At the top Athena introduces Hellas into Zeus' presence, in the centre King Darius surrounded by followers holds a council of war and below is a scene showing the collection of money and precious objects which alludes to the imminent campaign against the Greeks which finished with the defeat of the Persians at Marathon (490 BC).
An anonymous artist known as "the painter of Darius" or "painter of the Persian vase", active in the second half of the IV century BC in Apulia, is the author of this and other vase paintings such as the other shown here which represents various moments of the funeral honours given to the corpse of Patrocles with the cremation rites and sacrifice of the Persian prisoners.



ITALIANITE CERAMICS

Figures 10-11-12

The history of the ceramics of southern Italy is long and varied; we can see artistic currents with individual characteristics in Apulia, Lucania, Bruzio and Campania. Among the types of ceramics most noted is the "Gnathia" with a dark background on which are graceful decorations in which the colours white and gold predominate, then those from Paestum which bore scenes connected with the Dionysus myth and the local theatre, and those from Cuma in which war scenes predominated.



12

GOLD AND SILVER

Figures 13-14-15-16

The gold and silver objects found in the excavations of Herculaneum and Pompei give us an excellent idea of the economic conditions of these two small cities of Campania, or more precisely, the well-to-do families who lived there. From an artistic point of view not so much the jewellery but the silverware indicates refined taste. Of the pieces in question some must have been of Hellenistic craftsmanship and some from Roman workshops of the end of Republic beginning of the Empire which here and there were inspired by the Hellenistic world. The largest set is made up of 115 pieces found in the House of Menandro in Pompei, all of extremely high quality. However other isolated objects or smaller groups are worth mentioning as for example the bucket found in Herculaneum on which Aphrodite is shown bathing surrounded by her maids.

13

17

ARCHAIC JEWELLERY
Figure 17

Excellent examples of archaic jewellery such as buckles and necklaces datable in the 6th century BC have been found in Ruvo in Puglia.
They are thought to be of Etruscan workmanship as it is known that the Etruscans spread their works over a considerable area. The techniques used here and especially the granulation is extremely expert giving refined results.

GOLDEN CROWN
Figure 18

In southern Italy and in particular the area around Taranto goldsmiths flourished. Crowns, diadems, necklaces and earrings have been found in large numbers in the tombs in and surrounding Taranto.
The gold crown of Canosa is a beautiful example of the magnificent technique used in fashioning such a precious and delicate metal with excellent results and refined taste.

THE FARNESE CUP
Figure 19

The Farnese Cup is one of the largest cameos known in sardonyx with grey and brown strata. The external face is completely covered by a Gorgon's head whilst inside is an allegory of the Nile and its beneficial floods.
In the central group the Nile is personified as a bearded figure holding a cornucopia in his left hand, beside him is Horus with a plough whilst Isis sits at his feet. Above fly two young figures, the Etesii winds, which blowing against the flow of the Nile halt the waters forcing them to flood the nearby fields. Finally sitting on the ground are two nymphs.
The Cup came into the possession of the Farnese family from the Medicis (Lorenzo had inherited it from Pope Paul II) through Margaret of Austria whose first husband was Alessandro dei Medici and second husband Ottavio Farnese.

18

19

20

STATUES OF HOUSEHOLD GODS

Figure 20

The gods (larari) which protected the house and family were kept in small shrines. They were usually bronze statues of simple craftmanship often produced in series. A valid example is the group with the goddess of Fortune sitting on a richly adorned throne with the two Lari, omens of prosperity and abundance, on either side. Craftsmanship of the 1st century of the Empire.

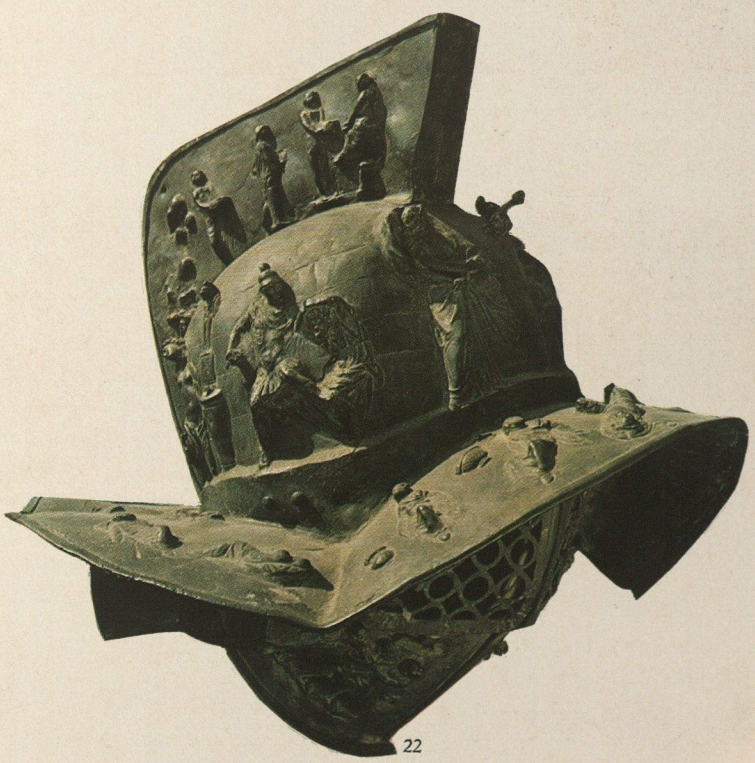
21

GLADIATOR'S HELMETS

Figures 21 and 22

In the excavations of Pompei a considerable amount of gladiator's armour has been found which differs from others inasmuch as it is richly decorated with figures. It was certainly not functional for battle purposes and therefore it is thought to have been used for wall decoration. The most interesting pieces are two helmets which bear decoration in high relief. On one helmet the last night of Troy is depicted with the various episodes which characterise that tragic event. On the second helmet the apotheosis of Rome is represented in a series of pictures and symbolic personages.

Workmanship of the 1st century of the Empire.



22

BRONZE VASES

Figures 23 e 24

In the Naples Museum is a vast collection of bronze vases which had many uses in the everyday life of the Romans. The vases according to their use had various forms – large bowls, amphorae, jugs, basins etc, obviously varying in size and shape. Corresponding forms are found in clay vases but it should be noted that the bronze vases were enhanced with decorations making them still more valuable. The handles, feet and bottoms in particular were adorned with figures of masks, ornate fruits etc, of handsome craftsmanship.

Send

ARTISTIC AND PROFESSIONAL INSTRUMENTS

Figures 25-26-27

Evidence of the various activities of a city's inhabitants can be seen from the tools and instruments brought to light in the excavations. This is infact the case with Herculaneum and Pompei.
Here we have musical instruments including sistrum and drums, used in special foreign cult cerimonies such as that of the Isis cult.

Surgical instruments give us an idea of the level medicine and operational techniques had reached in those times and finally there are measuring instruments necessary for land surveying and building so well done by the Romans.

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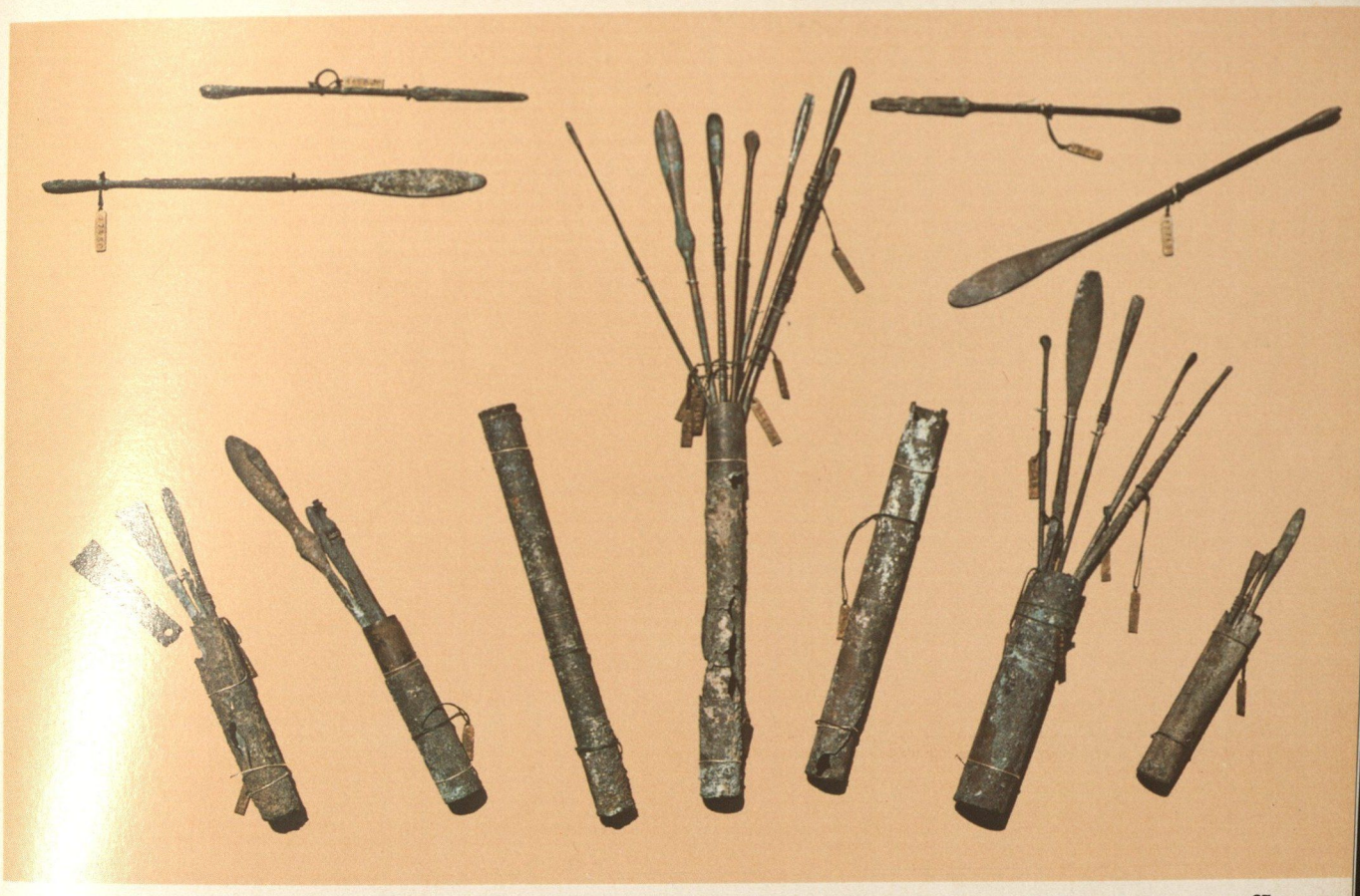
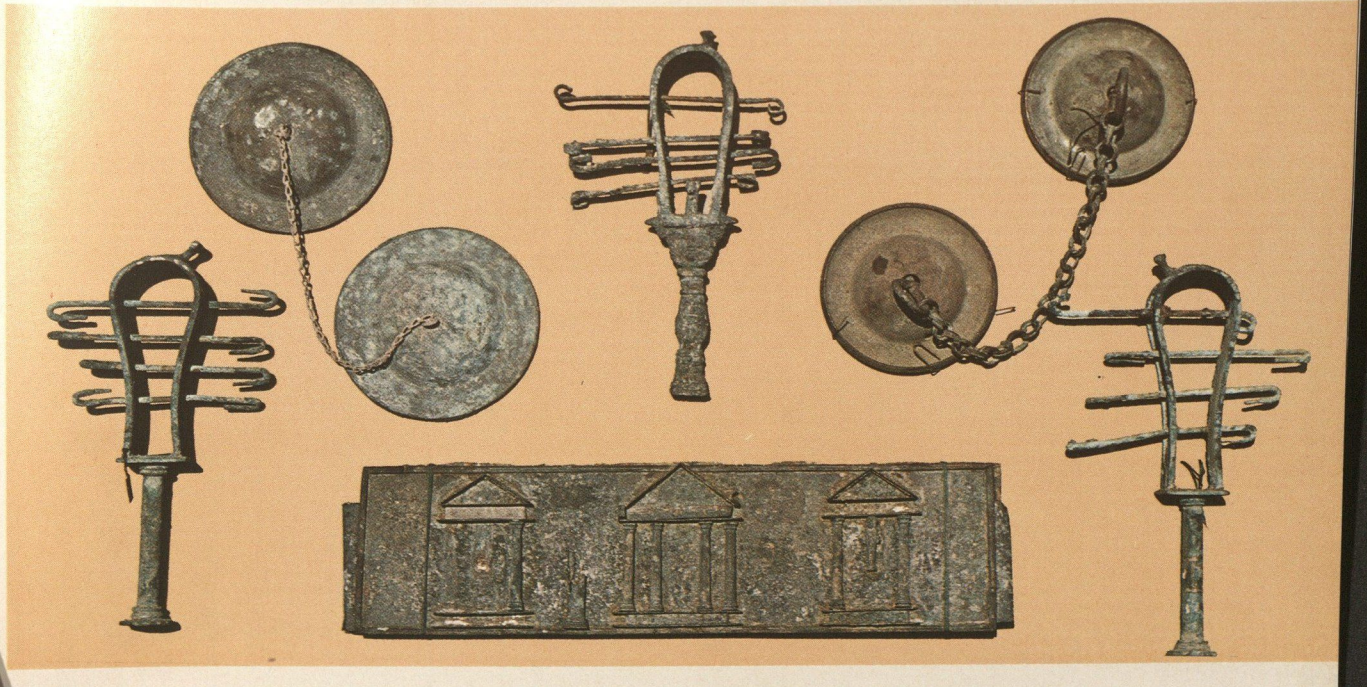
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